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Resources Report • Rapport sur les ressources

Timmins District
December, 1995

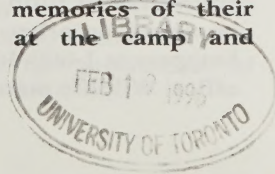
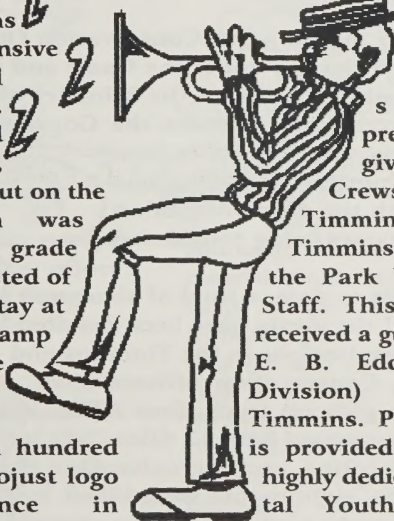
PARTNERS CELEBRATE MILESTONE

Four years ago, local educators and MNR staff agreed that the Timmins area needed a comprehensive environmental awareness program. Many meetings and discussions later, "Ecolojust" made its debut on the scene. The program was designed especially for grade five students and consisted of a three-day overnight stay at the Ontario Ranger camp situated within Kettle Lakes Provincial Park.

Four years and fifteen hundred students later the Ecolojust logo symbolizes excellence in environmental awareness and resource protection/management education. Students taking part in the program are exposed to a variety of activities based on MNR's Project Wild, Focus on Forests and Fish Ways manuals. Also, broad program objectives are guided by the Ministry of Education document Science is

Happening Here. To further reinforce the outdoor educational experience, special presentations are given by MNR Fire Crews, the City of Timmins Forester, the Timmins Fur Council and the Park Visitor Services Staff. This year, students received a guided tour of the E. B. Eddy (McChesney Division) saw mill in Timmins. Program delivery is provided by a group of highly dedicated Environmental Youth Corps (EYC) workers and two top notch

retired educators. Obviously, the Ecolojust program is showing long term results. A survey of early participants reveals a well developed environmental ethic. Surprisingly, older students still have vivid memories of their experiences at the camp and



admit to its formative impact on their present views on environmental advocacy. Finally, the program has been successful in creating an atmosphere of self motivation and discovery. This is in sharp contrast to the spoon-feeding philosophy of so many other efforts that eventually teaches us nothing but the shape of the spoon.

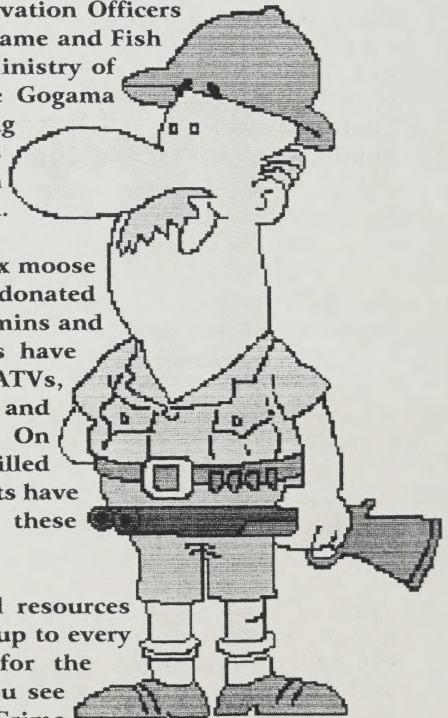


HUNTER'S ROUNDUP

During the 1995 moose hunt, Conservation Officers laid a total of 86 charges under the Game and Fish Act in the Timmins District of the Ministry of Natural Resources (this includes the Gogama area). As this resource report is being written, three hunting investigations are ongoing with the possibility of an additional 20 charges being considered.

From the charges to date, a total of six moose were seized and the meats have been donated to charitable organizations in the Timmins and Sudbury areas. Conservation officers have also seized one pick up truck, four ATVs, one Argo, one compound bow, 17 rifles and various other hunting paraphernalia. On the negative side, eight moose were killed and left to spoil in the bush. No suspects have as yet been identified in relation to these poaching activities.

It is important to remember that all resources belong to the people of Ontario. It is up to every individual to protect our wildlife for the enjoyment of future generations. If you see poaching or other illegal acts call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-461-7867 or the nearest Ministry of Natural Resources office. Wildlife management is everyone's business!



GOLDEN SPRINGS TRAIL GETS FACE LIFT

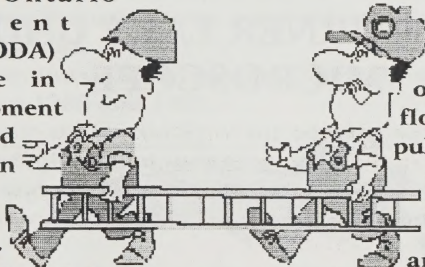
An ambitious community trail development effort was undertaken this summer by the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Mattagami Region Conservation Authority and the Timmins Trail Committee. Funding for this project was provided by the Northern Ontario Development Agreement (NODA) while expertise in trail development was procured through an Environmental Youth Corps (EYC), summer employment project. Other groups that contributed to the effort consisted of the Ontario Rangers and staff from Kettle Lakes Provincial Park.

The Golden Springs Trail system, originally designed and built in 1973, was to provide access to the Hersey Lake Conservation Area from downtown Timmins. Throughout the years, the trail system provided educational, interpretive and recreational opportunities to a variety of user groups. A victim of its popularity, the trail system began showing signs of overuse and basic trail design was inadequate to accommodate new activities such as mountain biking and

environmental studies.

Crews began work on the trail upgrade by removing approximately 200 trees. These trees had become safety hazards (widow makers) or impeded sight lines for hikers and bikers.

Following this selective cull, stumps that impeded or constricted the safe flow of traffic were pulverized with the help of a mechanical stump puller. To further enhance visibility and safety the entire fourteen kilometers of trail was cleared of side vegetation with the help of powered brush saws. Bumper posts and signs were strategically located at trail and road junctions. To simplify trail orientation a comprehensive directional signing system is now in place that give such details as distances and directions to various trail facilities and junctions. Finally, gravel was applied to about 4 kilometers of trail thus providing a buffer against erosion and a visual marker to first time trail users. Much more work remains to be done such as additional gravelling, the construction of a lookout and the production of



pocket size trail guide. The target is to have the entire project completed by next summer.

Residents appreciated the trail upgrades during this year's Ontario Hiking Day. Participants to the event enjoyed the guided hikes. First time users impressed with the system, expressed an interest in making the trail a regular part of their hiking

activities. For more information on area trails and associated opportunities contact the Mattagami Region Conservation Authority at:

100 Lakeshore Road (Gilles Lake Conservation Area)
Timmins, Ontario P4N 8R5
Phone 705-264-5309 Fax 705-268-6544

THREECORNER LAKE UNDER MICROSCOPE



The name Sir Sandford Fleming College (SSFC) in Lindsay, Ontario is well known to most people involved in the resource management business. Many MNR staffers trace their roots to this prestigious educational institution. What makes the College unique is that they have formed a real working relationship and partnership with the Ministry. For instance,

institution. What makes the College unique is that they have formed a real working relationship and partnership with the Ministry. For instance, SSFC has for the last eight years conducted various studies and made sound management recommendations on nine lakes in the Gogama area. Projects of this magnitude were only dreams for MNR, especially in the light of existing fiscal realities. This is what we call a win win situation. The College is able to offer the students meaningful field projects while MNR benefits by adding valuable data to the district fisheries data base.

This past summer the College carried out a study on Threecorner Lake south of the community of Gogama. The College supplied the field equipment while MNR took care of lodgings and fuel. The goals of the study consisted of the following:

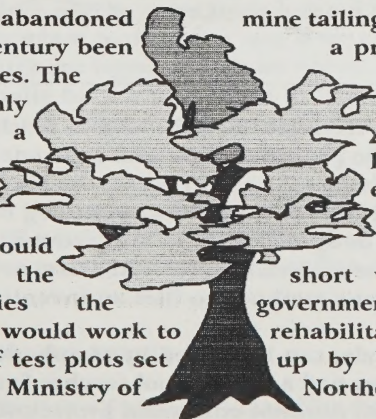
- a) To assess if muskellunge survived stocking efforts carried out during the 1960s.
- b) To determine walleye reproduction from adult transfers carried out between 1988 and 1992.
- c) To evaluate the feasibility of introducing small mouth bass in the system through habitat mapping.
- d) To tag and release as many fish species as possible in order to obtain a sound cross section of the lake's population composition.

Preliminary results indicate that the muskie did not survive and that the walleye are reproducing. The remaining field data is being analyzed by the College and a final report should be forthcoming. Bravo!

ALDERS ANYONE?

The Kam Kotia abandoned the last quarter century been to various ministries. The producing a highly has had a influence on the a q u a t i c associated with complex and could seller. However, the countless studies the to what remedies would work to include a series of test plots set and funded by the Ministry of

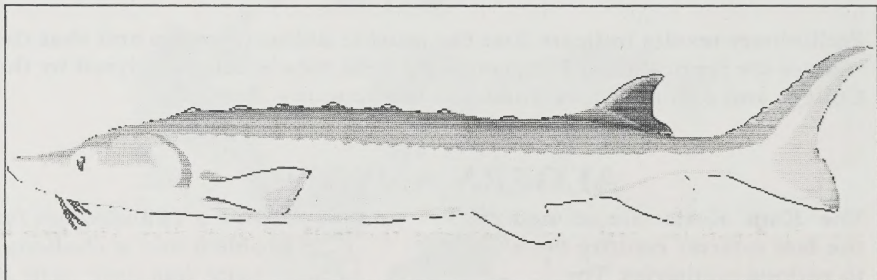
mine tailings near Timmins has for a problem and a challenge site has and still is acidic runoff. This considerable negative local terrestrial and environment. The story this site is long, easily produce a best short version is that after government is still not certain as rehabilitate the site. Efforts up by Laurentian University Northern Development and



Mines. These sample plots contain a variety of plants, shrubs and soils that will provide valuable information on revegetation in an acidic environment.

Recently, a small scale plantation was set up at the southern tip of the tailings to evaluate the survival rate of a variety of alder species. The trees were donated by a local forest research firm called Microtek. The company donated approximately 350 trees for the project. A good part of the test site was also limed by the firm Erocon Limited. Funding to cover materials and equipment costs was provided by Falconbridge Limited - Kidd Creek Division. Finally, the labour force for the planting effort came from the ranks of the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and the Ministry of Natural Resources. A total of nine people from the two ministries braved the mud and rain to give the potted plants a new home. Since some trees were located in an unlimed area a comparison can be made between the treated and untreated site. Who knows, these hardy little plants could be part of the answer to a problem that has plagued us for a very long time. Go alders!

REDISCOVERING AN OLD RESOURCE



Not many in life are so fortunate as to be able to reach the elusive goal of being able to acquire the proverbial cake and consume it at the same time. However, miracles do happen! Case in point, the Mattagami Area has for many years attempted to inventory the Groundhog River with emphasis on Sturgeon. Due to budget shortfalls and reduced staff these critical inventories could not be undertaken. Nevertheless, as the mutated saying goes "there are numerous methods to file an inventory".

A problem, like a puzzle, can be solved by simply putting all the pieces together. In this case we had a high school teacher from École Secondaire Theriault looking for an outdoor education project. Above all, he wanted

this project to be hands on and challenge his students. Next in the equation came a local fish and game club, "Les Aventuriers". This group of energetic outdoor enthusiasts is always on the lookout for opportunities to enhance our local natural resources. Finally, came MNR with the expertise needed for such a project but with butterflies in the budget and work force file.

The beauty of a small community like Timmins, is that individuals are involved in many different organizations. This results in the creation of an ad hoc information distribution system that in a local setting can rival the Internet. Word got around and a few handshakes later project CAMUS 95 (old french word for Sturgeon) was launched.

The primary objectives of this partnership were to locate and document critical fish habitat for Sturgeon. Efforts were concentrated at sites along the river identified by Ontario Hydro as potential power generating stations. In these areas data such as water levels, velocities and temperatures were documented. The information collected will become part of a baseline data system. This will be a valuable tool to managers involved in any development work on or along the river system. The next phase of the project involved capturing and tagging approximately forty (40) Sturgeon. Once released these fish will prove invaluable in obtaining information on migration patterns in the system. Further studies focused on discovering potential and actual spawning and rearing sites.

To the surprise of the students, some netted fish weighed up to 35 kilograms (80 lbs.). It was also pointed out to them that the specie is one of the most primitive of the ray-finned fish which dates back millions of years. The fish itself is a slow-moving bottom-dweller. It locates food by their sensitive barbels and by taste buds located outside and around the mouth. Small invertebrates comprise the bulk of their diet. The fish is famed for the blackish roe (eggs), which are salted and called Caviar. Some members of the family have been known to live up to 100 years, reach a length of 8.4 meters (28 feet) and tip the scales at 1,260 kilograms (2,800 lbs.).

Watching the last fish disappear in the fast-moving waters of the Groundhog River, all participants knew that their efforts helped advance the cause of resource management and education. Plans are already in the works for 1996.

Special thanks to the following people:

Teacher, École Secondaire Theriault - Dan Charbonneau

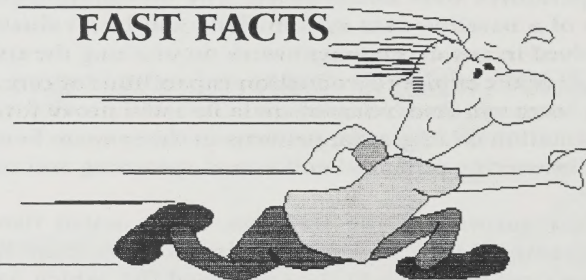
Students - Mel Lajeunesse, Anne Barette, Dan Lacroix, Claude Tanguay, Natalie Avolado, Patrick St-Onge, Dean Touchette, Dion Monette, Sylvie Lacroix, Patrick Yates, Jen Noël, Sabrina Leduc, Lizanne Lafleur, Tania Brunet, Angile Daoust, Kelly St-Pierre, Ward Groulx, Julie Matineau, Steph Thibeault, Bonnie MacGregor, Julie Levesque, Val Allaire, Jana Trembinski, Angela Chartrand, Renelle Poulin, Julie Goudreau, Tracy Legault, Rachel Wickstead, Dan Haffman, Serge Laverdure, Renée Dénomée, Marc Francoeur, Eric Lemay, Julie Corriveau.

Les Aventurier - Laurent Robichaud, Eddy Vien, Armand Lauzon Jackie Vien, Phil Doiron, Vic Lambert,.

Ministry of Natural Resources - Jacques Cavanagh, Mike Michell, Mariane Piché, John Seyler.

Sponsors - Timmins Home Care, Timmins Tire Sales, Falconbridge.

FAST FACTS



- The Thor Lake Cottagers Association recently finished a three year Community Fisheries Improvement Project (CFIP). The project involved stabilizing the water levels on the lake and constructing two spawning beds for walleye. The work on the spawning areas was done in the month of August by twelve dedicated volunteers. These individuals transported the aggregate from the community of Capreol and hand loaded the boats with the material. The gravel was then transported up the lake and emptied at two potential spawning sites. There is no doubt that this work was a fitness challenge to the participants. However, the results could be a renewed walleye fishery on the lake. Hats off to the group and may your Sportscream give your muscles relief.
- Also wanting to flex and work out their muscles, the Mesomikenda Lake Cottagers Association took on a CFIP project for the lake. Ten

hardy individuals rolled up their sleeves and cleaned up a potential spawning site on the west arm of the water body. The group intends to have the final gravel in place by the summer of 1996. Good work people, and the Thor Lake group may have some Sportscream left over for your sore muscles.

- The Dividing Lake Ontario Rangers have advanced the cause of fisheries management in the Gogama area by creating a spawning shoal for lake trout on Azure Lake. The work, like similar projects, is labour intensive and requires the liberal use of muscle power. Gravel for the shoal is usually transported by boat to the site and then spread as per instruction given by MNR staff. The Timmins District has since placed 50,000 lake trout eggs along the shoal in hopes of establishing a self sustaining population. Monitoring and assessments will be carried out to gauge the success of the project.
- Students in the Timmins area spent the summer carrying out gill netting operations in Peterlong, Nighthawk, Kenogamissi and Kenogaming Lakes. These operations will provide important information on how water levels and temperature fluctuations impact on the reproduction capabilities of certain fish species. The data will give biologists reliable estimates of future fish populations and the ability to implement specific strategies aimed at maintaining acceptable angler success rates. Tactics could include changes in limits, closures, a rotational fishery or slot limits. It should also be noted that such research activities are indispensable if we are to achieve the goal of true sustainable development.
- The cause of walleye rehabilitation was advanced by the construction and enhancement of spawning beds on Musgrove Lake and at the rapids between Mattagami and Kenogamissi Lakes. Gravel or what we call rip rap was spread on the bottom in the shallows thus creating a suitable environment for walleye to spawn. This back breaking work was carried out by summer students and Ontario Rangers. We are hoping for a "spawning" success.

Ce rapport est disponible en français. (705) 267-7951



Merry Christmas and Happy New year
Joyeux Noël et Bonne Heureuse Année

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